

## Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 AID-05 PM-04 NSC-05

SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /065 R

DRAFTED BY EA/TB:GBROBERTS:MGH

APPROVED BY EA:AWHUMMEL

ASIA/EA:RTAYLOR

D/HA/ORM:JCARLIN

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R 230038Z JUL 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY RANGOON

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 181986

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, SREF, BM, US

SUBJECT: COURTESY CALL BY BURMESE AMBASSADOR: AID AND  
REFUGEES

1. BURMESE AMBASSADOR U TIN LAT PAID A COURTESY CALL  
JULY 21 ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY HUMMEL. HE TOLD HUMMEL  
THAT HE WOULD BE GOING TO NEW YORK FOR THE LAW OF THE  
SEA CONFERENCE BEGINNING IN AUGUST AND WOULD THEN BE  
STAYING ON FOR THE UNGA. HE WOULD THUS NOT BE IN WASH-  
INGTON FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS EXCEPT ON WEEKENDS.

2. TIN LAT MENTIONED THE MEETING OF THE BURMA AID CON-  
SORTIUM SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 30 IN TOKYO. HE SAID  
THAT HE WAS AWARE THAT THE U.S. WOULD BE ATTENDING BUT  
THAT OUR POSITION WAS ONE OF NOT HAVING MADE ANY COM-  
MITMENTS. HE SAID THAT BURMA DID NOT EXPECT MANY POSI-  
TIVE RESULTS FROM THIS FIRST MEETING. THE GUB WOULD,  
HOWEVER, LIKE INCREASED U.S. INTEREST IN THE CONSORTIUM.

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3. HUMMEL SAID THAT IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE WORLD BANK HAD RECOMMENDED SEVERAL BASIC ECONOMIC REFORMS TO THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT. TIN LAT SAID THAT THESE REFORMS HAD ALREADY BEEN INSTITUTED. THE TAX SYSTEM HAD BEEN REVISED, AND THE LOWEST PAID WORKERS'

COST-OF-LIVING ALLOWANCES HAD BEEN RAISED. IN ADDITION, THE IMF WAS GOING TO PROVIDE SOME ASSISTANCE. HUMMEL SAID HE WAS PLEASED TO HEAR THAT THESE REFORMS HAD BEEN INSTITUTED BUT WENT ON TO SAY THAT AS FAR AS ANY U.S. AID TO BURMA WAS CONCERNED, THE BALL WAS IN THE BURMESE COURT. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT HAD ASKED THAT OUR PREVIOUS AID PROGRAM BE TERMINATED AND, THEREFORE, IT WAS UP TO THE BURMESE TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE IF AN ECONOMIC AID RELATIONSHIP WERE TO BE RE-INSTITUTED.

4. TIN LAT ASKED HOW BURMA SHOULD APPROACH THE U.S. ON AID MATTERS AND WHAT MIGHT BE IN THE USG'S MIND WITH RESPECT TO AID TO BURMA. HUMMEL SAID THAT WE HAD NO PLAN. HE SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THE BEST APPROACH TO US MIGHT BE IN THE CONSORTIUM, BUT HE EXPLAINED THAT OUR BUDGETARY PROCESSES MEANT THAT THERE WOULD BE A VERY LONG LEAD TIME BEFORE ANY NEW AID PROJECTS OR PROGRAMS COULD BE APPROVED.

5. TIN LAT ASKED FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE WITH REGARD TO THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES ABOARD A BURMESE MERCHANT SHIP NOW IN HONG KONG. HUMMEL EXPLAINED THAT OUR SPECIAL VIETNAMESE REFUGEE PROGRAMS HAD ENDED BUT THAT VIETNAMESE WERE STILL COMING TO THE U.S. UNDER NORMAL VISA PROCEDURES. HE SAID THAT WE NO LONGER FELT THAT THE U.S. HAD ANY SPECIAL PRIMARY BILATERAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR VIETNAMESE REFUGEES. OUR POSITION WAS THAT THE UNHCR WAS THE PROPER AGENCY TO TAKE INITIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THESE REFUGEES. HE RECOMMENDED THAT TIN LAT ADVISE HIS GOVERNMENT TO GET IN TOUCH WITH APPROPRIATE UNHCR REPRESENTATIVES IN ORDER TO RESOLVE THIS PARTICULAR REFUGEE PROBLEM. ROBINSON

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